IN SPECTRUM

Migrant minds and making of Lahore's intellectual modernity

By Tahir Kamran

IN the latter half of the nineteenth century Lahore emerged as the principal intellectual and literary centre of North India, a position it acquired neither by historical accident nor by the uninterrupted continuation of pre-colonial traditions. Rather, its ascent must be understood as the outcome of deliberate colonial intervention in the domains of education, language, and culture following the British annexation of Punjab in 1849. The remaking of Lahore's intellectual landscape was mediated through institutions, policies, and individuals who were themselves migrants—geographically, culturally, or intellectually. Among these, Colonel William Rice Moreland Holroyd, Dr. Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner, and Muhammad Hussain Azad occupy a central place. Acting through the Directorate of Public Instruction, the Anjuman-i-Punjab, the reform of Urdu mushairas, and the establishment of Government College Lahore and the Punjab University, they inaugurated, what may be described as, a colonial vernacular modernity.

Viewed through an Orientalist lens, however, this modernity was not ideologically neutral. As Edward Said, Bernard Cohn, and Tariq Rahman have variously argued, colonial knowledge was inseparable from power, classification, and governance, and the elevation of vernaculars such as Urdu functioned simultaneously as an instrument of reform and of control.

The annexation of Punjab brought education immediately within the purview of colonial governance. Initially administered by Judicial Commissioner Robert Montgomery and later by Financial Commissioner D. F. McLeod, educational policy in the province was decisively shaped by Wood's Despatch of 1854. The Despatch, often hailed as the Magna Carta of Indian education, prescribed the establishment of separate provincial education departments and emphasized the dissemination of knowledge through vernacular languages, alongside the encouragement of classical Oriental languages such as Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian.

Bernard Cohn's insight into colonialism as an "investigative modality" is particularly illuminating here: the classification, codification, and standardisation of languages were not merely pedagogical measures but techniques of rule. By privileging certain vernaculars and institutionalising them through state machinery, the colonial state rendered Indian society legible and administratively manageable.

In January 1856, a distinct Department of Public Instruction was created in Punjab, with authority vested in the Director of Public Instruction and a cadre of European inspectors. This apparatus survived the rupture of 1857 and was reaffirmed under Crown rule in 1859, ensuring policy continuity. As Tariq Rahman has argued, the post-1857 period witnessed a strategic deployment of language policy to stabilise British authority, particularly through the promotion of Urdu as a vernacular associated with Muslim elites yet detached from the political radicalism of Persian. Lahore, as the provincial capital, became the principal site where this policy was operationalised and culturally elaborated.

The appointment of Colonel William Rice Moreland Holroyd as Director of Public Instruction (DPI) in 1868 marked a critical moment in this process. Holroyd was not merely an administrator but a cultural arbiter who believed that literature could serve as an instrument of moral instruction and social reform. Under his supervision, Urdu was transformed from a functional medium of instruction into a vehicle for reshaping literary taste. His patronage of Urdu mushairas, convened under the auspices of the Anjuman-i-Punjab, represented an unprecedented attempt by the colonial state to intervene directly in the evolution of indigenous literary forms. From a Saidian perspective, these efforts exemplify Orientalism's "positional superiority": the assumption that the colonial official could diagnose the decadence of native culture and prescribe corrective measures derived from European norms of realism, morality and discipline.

If Holroyd embodied official authority, Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner supplied intellectual energy and institutional imagination. A Hungarian-born polymath and accomplished linguist, Leitner arrived in Lahore in 1864 as the first principal of the Government College. His educational philosophy diverged sharply from the Anglicist orthodoxy associated with Macaulay. Instead, he championed Oriental learning and the diffusion of "useful knowledge" through vernacular languages. Yet, as Bernard Cohn would remind us, this Orientalism was not antithetical to colonial power but complementary to it. Leitner's advocacy of vernacular education rested on the premise that Indian knowledge systems could be preserved, classified, and reformed within a framework defined by European epistemology.

The founding of the Anjuman-i-Punjab in 1865 epitomised this synthesis of Orientalist scholarship and colonial governance. Though elitist in composition and closely aligned with government authority, the Anjuman sought to revive classical learning while simultaneously introducing modern scientific, social and literary ideas in Urdu. Its activities—public lectures, journals, translations, libraries, and educational institutions—created a discursive space in which indigenous elites were co-opted into the colonial project of reform. Tariq Rahman's observation that the Anjuman functioned as a "zealous advocate of oriental studies" is crucial here: it was a site where Orientalism was indigenised and made productive for both the colonial state and local elites.

The Anjuman's most enduring institutional legacies were the establishment of Oriental College and the Punjab University College in 1869, later elevated to a full university in 1882. These institutions embodied Leitner's belief that higher education in India should rest on vernacular foundations. At the same time, they exemplified, what Said would describe as, the reconstitution of the Orient through Western systems of knowledge. Classical Arabic and Persian learning was preserved, but within curricula, examinations, and administrative structures designed by the colonial state.

The cultural programme of Holroyd and Leitner found its most articulate literary expression in Muhammad Hussain Azad. A migrant from Delhi whose life was irrevocably disrupted by the events of 1857, Azad arrived in Lahore as a displaced intellectual and gradually emerged as the linchpin of the Anjuman-i-Punjab. His roles as lecturer, secretary, editor, and later assistant professor at Government College placed him at the intersection of education, literature, and colonial patronage. Azad's trajectory exemplifies what Tariq Rahman has identified as the emergence of a new class of vernacular intellectuals whose authority derived from their mediation between colonial knowledge and indigenous culture.

Azad's manifesto at the mushaira of May 1874, in which he subjected classical Urdu poetry to critical scrutiny and called for new themes and forms inspired partly by English literature, marked a decisive rupture with the Persianate aesthetic tradition. While his criticism was uneven, it inaugurated modern literary criticism in Urdu and reflected the internalisation of Orientalist categories of progress, decadence, and reform. His prose works, particularly *Qisas-i-Hind* and *Ab-e-Hayat*, further illustrate this transformation. By re-narrating Indian history and Urdu literary development through a quasi-historiographical lens, Azad participated in, what Bernard Cohn would describe as, the colonial reordering of the past.

The mushairas held between 1874 and 1875 were the most visible manifestation of this new literary discipline. Poets were assigned subjects such as nature, patriotism, and moral dialogue, and encouraged to compose nazms rather than ghazals. Although the experiment was short-lived and met with resistance, its long-term influence was profound. Altaf Hussain Hali's emergence as the most accomplished poet of these gatherings demonstrated the expressive potential of the nazm as a vehicle for modern sensibility. His later work, particularly *Musaddas-e-Hali*, would extend the ethical and reformist impulses first cultivated in Lahore.

The institutional and literary transformations initiated in this period ensured that Lahore inherited the cultural mantle of Delhi and Lucknow after 1857. Government College, Oriental College, and the Punjab University provided a durable infrastructure for vernacular scholarship, while journals, poets, and critics carried forward the aesthetic and ideological shifts inaugurated under the Anjuman's patronage. In this sense, Lahore became not merely a recipient of displaced cultural capital but a site where colonial Orientalism was reworked into a vernacular modernity.

The influence of Holroyd, Leitner, and Muhammad Hussain Azad on Lahore's instructional and literary culture was thus neither accidental nor ephemeral. It arose from the convergence of colonial educational policy, Orientalist knowledge practices, and migrant intellectual capital displaced by the upheavals of mid-nineteenth-century North India. By reshaping institutions, reforming literary practice, and legitimising Urdu as a medium of modern knowledge, they helped inaugurate a new cultural order. Yet, as Said, Cohn, and Rahman collectively remind us, this order was deeply entangled with power, producing not only enlightenment and reform but also new hierarchies of language, knowledge, and authority. Lahore's intellectual modernity, forged in this crucible, was, therefore, as much a product of colonial governance as it was of indigenous creativity.

District bars elect officials across Punjab

By Wajih Ahmad Sheikh

FAISALABAD: A lawyer casts her vote. — APP

LAHORE: PTI-supported Irfan Hayat Bajwa of Hamid Khan-led professional group was elected president of the Lahore Bar Association (LBA) for 2026-27 in an election held on Saturday.

Bajwa defeated Adeeb Aslam Bhinder of Ahsan Bhoon-led independent group, known as Asma Jahangir group, by a margin of 405 votes. He obtained 3,559 votes, while Bhinder secured 3,154.

Interestingly, both had contested last year's election as independent candidates as LBA outgoing president Mubashir Rehman Chaudhry was fielded by the professional group. Bhinder had stood runner-up while Mian Faiz Ali of the independent group came third. Bhinder was also 2024 election's runner-up when Munir Bhatti of Asma Jahangir's group notched the top slot with a margin of over 2,500 votes.

This year, Bajwa and Bhinder were formally fielded by the professional and independent groups, respectively.

The third candidate for president's lot was Shahid Jamal Butt, who secured 122 votes. The lawyer wings of PML-N and PPP supported the independent group. For the two posts of secretary, Shoaib Arshad Bhatti and Malik Fahad Nisar Khokhar were elected.

For four posts of vice president, Tahir Munir, Humayun Zaheer, Asif Kanwal (Model Town seat) and Zahid Mahmood Gul (Cantonment seat) were elected. As soon as the results were announced, the successful candidates celebrated and congratulated each other. The members of Insaf Lawyers Forum and supporters of Mr Bajwa chanted slogans in favour of former prime minister Imran Khan.

MULTAN: The district bar association of Multan on Saturday made history by electing a woman president for the first time since its inception.

In a one-on-one contest, Syeda Bushra Naqvi, affiliated to PPP, won the top slot with 1,143 votes against 873 bagged by her rival Chaudhry Afzal Butt. Naeem Arain was elected vice president and Malik Saadat Hassan general secretary.

BAHAWALPUR: Sheikh Khursheed Ahmed Sahoo and Muneebur Rehman Bhatti were elected president and general secretary respectively of Bahawalpur District Bar Association.

According to the election board, Sahoo obtained 549 votes against 95 of his rival Rehan Khan Mitroo. Bhatti obtained 589 votes while his opponent Hafiz Niaz Ahmed Gharwan secured 409 votes.

DERA GHAZI KHAN: Saleem Jan Khosa was elected president of DBA, Dera Ghazi Khan. He defeated Mehmood Khetran while Khalid Gopang won the slot of secretary general.

OKARA: Ch Muhammad Farooq Sangoka was elected president of the DBA Okara with a majority of 115 votes against his rival Ali Adnan Qureshi.

Asima Gillani and Tariq Naseem Mangan were elected senior vice president and general secretary respectively.

The candidates for other five posts including vice president, joint secretary, finance secretary, library secretaries and auditor have already been elected unopposed.

MUZAFFARGARH: Saeedullah was elected president and Imtiaz Khan Sohrani general secretary of the DBA Muzaffargarh in an election held on Saturday.

ALIPUR: Ismail Khan Gabol was elected president of the tehsil bar for the second consecutive term.

According to official results, Gabol secured 290 votes defeating his closest rival Rana Abdul Karim, who obtained 260 votes. Saddam Hussain was elected general secretary.

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Active Directory & Microsoft Exchange Administrator- AVP-I/AVP (No. of Position: 01)

Experience:. Minimum 08 years of relevant professional experience.
Qualification: Minimum Bachelor's degree from HEC recognized Institute/University (National/ International).
Job Responsibilities:
- Manage and administer Microsoft servers, including Windows Server, Exchange Server, SQL Server, and domain controllers.
- Configure and maintain server clusters for high availability and failover support in both production and disaster recovery sites.
- Manage Exchange Server, including user mailboxes, distribution lists, email routing, and security settings. Administer and maintain the Active Directory infrastructure, including user accounts, security groups, permissions, and Group Policy.
- Install, configure, and manage antivirus software to ensure server and data security.
- Implement regular patching and updates for servers to ensure system security and stability.
- Develop and maintain disaster recovery plans and procedures, including backup strategies, data replication, and failover procedures.
- Implement and enforce security policies, access controls, and server hardening measures. Maintain accurate documentation of server configurations, procedures, and troubleshooting steps.
- Provide technical support to end-users and assist in training staff on server-related processes and best practices.
- Any other task assigned by the management.

Oracle Forms Developer-VP-I/VP (No. of Positions: 02)

Experience: Minimum 10 years of relevant professional experience.
Qualification: Minimum Bachelor's degree from HEC recognized Institute/University (National/ International).
Job Responsibilities:
- Bridging banking operations with technology, ensuring seamless translation of business needs into scalable, secure, and compliant solutions within agile frameworks. Skilled in business analysis, solution architecture, and system integration for core banking and enterprise applications.
- Proven expertise in digital transformation, API integration, and legacy modernization with strong leadership in cross-functional coordination.
- Adept at delivering high-performance, reliable, and business-aligned technology solutions driving operational excellence.
- Any other task assigned by the management.

Database Administrator (Oracle, MSSQL & MySQL) – AVP-I/AVP (No. of Positions: 02)

Experience Minimum 08 years of relevant professional experience.
Qualification: Minimum Bachelor's degree from HEC recognized Institute/University (National/ International).
Job Responsibilities:
- Administration & performance analysis for both the host & Databases.
- Oracle (RAC/Single Instance), Microsoft SQL Server, and MySQL. Assist in data migration projects, database upgrades, and system integrations.
- Database performance tuning, query optimization, and troubleshooting.
- Backup & Disaster Recovery Technologies using Conventional, RMAN, Active Data-guard and Golden-Gate etc.
- Installation, Upgrading, Patching management & Security of Oracle Database Single & RAC instances.
- Hands-on Linux Administration and Shell Scripting.
- Strong hands on experience in administration & management of MS SQL Server & MySQL.
- Any other task assigned by the management.

Data Engineer –OG-II (No. of Positions: 02)

Experience: Minimum 03 years of relevant professional experience.
Qualification: Minimum Bachelor's degree from HEC recognized Institute/University (National/ International).
Job Responsibilities:
- Strong understanding of relational data modeling and data warehouse design. Familiarity with cloud platforms (e.g., Oracle Cloud, Azure, AWS) is an advantage. Knowledge of data privacy laws (e.g., GDPR, CCPA) and good data governance practices.
- Strong understanding of Oracle APEX architecture and its core programming languages (SQL, PL/SQL, JavaScript, HTML, CSS).
- Excellent communication skills and ability to work cross-functionally.
- Develop and maintain ETL pipelines to extract, transform, and load data from various sources using Oracle tools or SQL-based frameworks.
- Build and optimize data models (star/snowflake schemas) for business intelligence and self-service analytics.
- Create and manage interactive dashboards and reports using Power BI (Tableau experience is a plus).
- Collaborate with IT, business analysts, and data owners to define and implement secure data flows.
- Maintain data documentation, including flow diagrams, data dictionaries, and data catalogs. Automate routine data processes and implement version control and testing best practices.
- Ensure compliance with data privacy regulations and internal data governance standards.
- Deliver proof of concept (PoC) data solutions for evolving business needs. Continuously improving processes by adopting modern data engineering and analytics practices.

Any other task assigned by the management.

IT Support Services Engineer (End User Support)-OG-II (No. of Positions: 03)

Experience: Minimum 03 years of relevant professional experience.
Qualification: Minimum Bachelor's degree from HEC recognized Institute/University (National/ International).
Job Responsibilities:
- Management, Monitoring of ITSM Application for resolution of all IT issues as Level-I support and update of records/tickets.
- Configuration of all official Software on end user's computers. Responsible for application configuration, installation of Windows / Linux and OS upgradation.
- Install and configure computer hardware operating systems & applications.
- Configuration of systems & network problems, diagnosing and solving hardware or software faults.
- Follow Procedures and written instructions to repair a fault or set up a system including testing and evaluating new technology.
- Assess reported problems and convey solutions to users in field. Provide support on application configuration and their operational Status.
- Facilitate implementation and rollout of all IT Initiatives in their respective geographical area.
- Knowledge of Networking (TCP / IP, DNS, DHCP) and experience with switches, Firewall & Routers, Servers.
- Troubleshooting of System & Network, Active Directory, Microsoft 365. Troubleshooting of Desktop, Laptops, Printers, Scanners & Mobile Devices. Also provide the technical support to end user on computer hardware & software applications and network connectivity and Business Applications.
- Any other task assigned by the management.

Infrastructure Security Administrator –AVP-I/ AVP (No. of Position: 01)

Experience Minimum 08 years of relevant professional experience.
Qualification: Minimum Bachelor's degree from HEC recognized Institute/University (National/ International).
Job Responsibilities:
- Experience with enterprise antivirus/EDR platforms (e.g., Trend Micro, Microsoft Defender, Crowd Strike, etc.).
- Hands-on experience in blocking IOCs (IPs, domains, file hashes) via AV, firewalls, and DNS filters.
- Knowledge of Windows/Linux server security hardening and CIS/NIST benchmarks.
- Experience with firewalls, VPNs, IDS/IPS and managing access control lists. Deploy, monitor, and manage enterprise-grade endpoint protection and EDR/XDR solutions across all systems.
- Apply and enforce Indicators of Compromise (IOCs) across firewalls, antivirus, DNS filters, and email gateways to block advanced threats. Configure, monitor, and optimize firewall policies, IDS/IPS, PAM Solutions, DLP, VPN access, and zero trust network segmentation.
- Ensure timely patch management of OS, firmware, and third-party applications in line with security policy and compliance requirements.
- Maintain and enforce security baselines for servers, workstations, virtualization platforms, and cloud workloads using CIS/NIST hardening guides.
- Enforce multi-factor authentication (MFA), role-based access control (RBAC), and secure onboarding/Off-boarding of users. Participate in Business Continuity (BCP) and Disaster Recovery (DR) planning, testing, and improvement from a security perspective.
- Any other task assigned by the management.

Switch and Payment Applications Support Officer –AVP-I/AVP (No. of Position: 01)

Experience Minimum 08 years of relevant professional experience.
Qualification: Minimum Bachelor's degree from HEC recognized Institute/University (National/ International).
Job Responsibilities:
- Operate, maintain and upgrade switch and payment systems, including patch management, version updates, and environment handling (Live/SIT/UAT).
- Provide round-the-clock support for all digital channels, including the generation and management of relevant portals and reports.
- Deliver 24/7 incident response, manage user roles and logs, and oversee test environments for test card issuance.
- Administer and maintain integrations across systems such as card issuing/acquiring, EMV, HSM, CBS, and 1LINK.
- Ensure regulatory compliance with SBP, PCI DSS, ISO standards, and ATM encryption/security protocols; monitor KPIs, suggest enhancements, and align operations with business objectives.
- Configure and integrate new ATMs based on branch requirements; manage ATM alerts (SMS), IBFT/biller interfaces and updates, disaster recovery drills, and onboarding of new billers.
- Collaborate with QA teams to test new features and scenarios. Coordinate with Information Security and Risk teams to implement encryption measures and prevent fraud.
- Enforce server access restrictions to authorized IPs and subnets. Ensure ATM encryption, PCI-DSS compliance, and security deployment.
- Any other task assigned by the management.

-: Eligibility/Ineligibility Criteria:-

- Maximum age limit for VP-I/VP **50**-years, AVP-I/AVP **45**-years and OG-II **35**-Years as on closing date to apply.
- Market competitive remuneration will be offered.
- The applicant must possess excellent communication, analytical, interpersonal, adaptability and teamwork skills.
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